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ETHNIC CONFLICT AND CENTCOM POLICY
FOR THE CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

by

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As a research project I could have picked many topics, but chose one that stretched my academic skills, research abilities, and comprehension of a topic about which I knew little. Ignorant of the region, I began this project hoping to start something that would broaden my horizons and possibly even help build or explain US military policy. The first aspect is an understatement -- the second may yet be in the future.

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Abstract

This paper identifies a possible shortfall in US military planning, the experience of CENTCOM planners in dealing with the Central Asian States. Their emphasis is understandably focused on Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan. This paper will develop for these planners the most likely threat to stability in CENTCOM's AOR – ethnic conflict caused by spillover from neighboring countries. This paper will also attempt to counter critics in the January/February 2000 *Foreign Affairs* who maintain that our “obtuse military ties” are not sensible nor sustainable. They describe our current activities as “a manner reminiscent of ill-advised US activities in Latin America in the 1970s.” All of these condemnations from Jaffe and Manning, although most unfounded, are perceptions that senior economists and political scientists hold. This paper will help CENTCOM “fire for effect” in developing and implementing a dynamic engagement strategy in this important region.

The paper develops the theoretical framework of ethnic conflict, generated both internally and from spillover. Then this framework is applied to Central Asia, illustrating it as a complex region of numerous ethnic groups in a “bad neighborhood” with some powerful “bad neighbors.” These neighbors, as well as the United States have vital interests in engaging in this region. Those interests, derived from the NSS, revolve around vital, important, and tertiary interests including humanitarian issues. WMD proliferation and transnational drug smuggling are major threats while Central Asian resources and US influence and credibility are major goals of US and CENTCOM involvement here.

This involvement has been seemingly disjointed and even at odds with other governmental agencies. CENTCOM activities, currently limited to only three of the five republics is rated on effect and analyzed into general courses of action. Lastly, the paper sets the stage for all CENTCOM policies by establishing “bounding” questions that can be used to guide productive CENTCOM engagement through the complexities of Central Asia and its possible ethnic conflict.

Part 1

Introduction: Background and Methodology

After the collapse of the Former Soviet Union, there was a mountain of unresolved issues that made the promise of a brighter future not as close as everyone had believed. One of these problems is US engagement activities in the Newly Independent States (NIS). The problem is that military planners have little experience with this issue, particularly in the Central Asian States (CAS) of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In this paper, I took a three-step approach to solving it. I first familiarized the reader with ethnic conflict, its proximate and underlying causes. Then the paper describes what is at stake in Central Asia in terms of US interests. My third step is evaluating current US Central Command (CENTCOM) activities in the CAS and recommend some improvements.

I had to start with a detailed narrative of the theoretical background of ethnic conflict. Theories, supporting examples, and their applications in Central Asia bolstered my argument that ethnic conflict and spillover remain the major threat to US interests in the area. Economic and demographic statistics supported claims by theorists in my descriptions of bad neighborhoods and dangerous situations. Once the background was complete, I needed to emphasize that establishing a coherent plan for total US military engagement was important by researching the value of the region and the threats to our interest in the area. Defining “US interests,” detailing the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and analyzing both the natural resources and

transnational threats in Central Asia supported my goals. The few competing views found, were included in this part of the work on both the area's importance and effect of traditional policies on the region. Finally, CENTCOM planning documents and engagement tools allowed me to look at ongoing activities for a coherent and spelled out strategy. As a collective, I could rate the events as very effective, effective, or somewhat effective, when given the current context. Overall, the research led me to conclude that CENTCOM must create a more effective strategy of engagement in Central Asia to protect vital, important, and humanitarian interests from the threat of ethnic conflict.



Figure 1. The Central Asian States.

Part 2

Ethnic Conflict as the Threat to Regional Stability

Scenario: Today Kazakhstan retaliated on Tashkent, Uzbekistan, with chemical and biological weapons making it a virtual wasteland. Former Soviet scientists inside Kazakhstan developed these weapons, under loose governmental control, in former Soviet laboratories. The attack was in response to Uzbekistan's expulsion and slaughter of thousands of ethnic Kazakhs within its borders and the destruction of 50 miles of the priceless oil pipeline that has fueled Kazakhstan's economic expansion. As a member of the CIS Security Arrangement, Kazakhstan will bring Russian forces into the region. On the other side, as the 7th largest producer of uranium and with the world's 15th largest energy reserves, Uzbek leaders expect Chinese and Western backing. Could leaders have foreseen this escalation from ethnic violence to global involvement?

Although this scenario is not going to occur this year, this situation and CENTCOM's preparedness to fulfill its National Military Strategy (NMS) roles of "shaping, responding, and preparing now" for this scenario are topics that cry for attention. Ethnic conflict, long misunderstood, has been the root of many crises over the past decade involving United Nations, NATO, and US forces. Today, there are more than 35 ongoing conflicts with over half being "ethnically driven." In fact, these civil wars, as one study concluded, have made up 10 of the 13 "most deadly conflicts" of the 19th and 20th centuries.¹

Ethnic conflict in this region presents specific political and military challenges. Challenges for the region include interrelated domestic policies, significant foreign influence, and the newness of these states. For the US military, challenges include former Soviet training, equipment, and doctrine, the nature of ethnic conflict, and the geographic context of the CAS.

But the stakes are high and CENTCOM must be ready through preparation and, more importantly, an enhanced understanding, of the threat posed by ethnic conflict.

Defining Ethnic Conflict Historically

This understanding has have a starting point. Timothy Sisk defines ethnic conflict as:

Ethnic conflict is defined in terms of political, social, or military confrontation, violent and non-violent, in which the disputants describe themselves in terms of race, language, religion, culture, or nationality or some combination of ascriptive criteria.²

From the Mongol invasions of Central Asia to the Soviet conquests of this region, political change has most often been implemented through violence. These violent changes were based on religion, nationality, ethnicity, or just pure conquest. Clashes between cultures and societies created the extremely complicated ethnic groups in Central Asia today. For example, the Kazakhs started as a nomadic Turkic people, but later converted to Sunni Muslims after Genghis Khan conquered them in the 13th century.³ In the 1700s, Cossacks (.....) dominated the region and by 1885 Alexander III's Russian (Orthodox) Empire controlled all of Central Asia.⁴ Destroying their religious practices, their assets, and their mobility, the Bolsheviks made the union ruinous for Kazakhs by 1920.⁵ This is but *one example* of the complex history of the current ethnic situation in Central Asia. The common thread throughout the region is the aspect of Soviet dominance and Soviet-style policies through most of the twentieth century.

The era of Soviet domination provided this multi-ethnic region with three essential elements: (1) political stability, (2) security for all ethnic groups, and, most importantly, (3) a relatively predictable future. The Soviets used immigration and ethnic resettlement as tools to maintain the balance of power within the region much in the same way many dictators do. This limited the power of any one ethnic group while damping ethnic tensions within the now

interdependent groups. But like the former Yugoslavia, the dissolution of the Soviet Union erased this interdependence and eliminated the three qualities that Soviet Communism had brought. Thus, today's ethnic problems are caused by the removal of hard-line communism that has unlocked "ancient hatreds"...or has it?

According to David Lake and Donald Rothchild, this common deduction is false:

Ethnic conflict is not caused by inter-group differences, 'ancient hatreds', or the stresses of modern life within a global economy. Nor did the end of the Cold War simply uncork ethnic passions long-bottled up by repressive communist regimes. Rather, ethnic conflict is caused by collective fears for the future. Instead ethnic conflict often takes root as groups begin to fear for their physical safety, and a series of dangerous and difficult to resolve strategic dilemmas arise that contain within them the potential for tremendous violence.⁶

Revisiting the three concepts brought by Soviet control-political stability, security, and predictable futures-a situation "ripe" for ethnic conflict has developed. What factors serve as the triggers or proximate causes for these conflicts? Michael Brown, an expert on the nature of war, suggests that there are four possible causes: bad leaders, bad domestic problems, bad neighbors, and bad neighborhoods.⁷ Let us look at each one of these.

Bad Leaders

Most internal conflict is rooted in bad leaders. Of the ongoing conflicts, over 20 were elite-triggered versus 7 "mass-triggered" struggles.⁸ These struggles can be categorized as ideological, criminal, or pure power-struggles. For instance, the current conflict in Tajikistan is a *power*, rather than *ideological*, struggle. In this case, unorganized ethnic minorities are vulnerable to scapegoating, ethnic-bashing, and discrimination solely to court the power inherent in the majority. Brown says, "power struggles are most likely to lead to widespread violence when political elites are vulnerable, group histories are antagonistic, and domestic economic problems are mounting."⁹ In Tajikistan and throughout the CAS, leaders are suspect in the

wisdom of their policies given their ethnic situations. Questionable are the Uzbek and Kazakh Presidents who have both mandated single official languages. This may be acceptable in the case of Uzbekistan's 74% ethnic Uzbek population but is it effective for Kazakhs who only make up roughly 45% of their country? In each case, the presidents appear to be wooing the single biggest ethnic groups--those in power within the government. One more complicating factor is that Russians and other minorities provide the scientific and business expertise in these countries. To alienate them through poor leadership will be to drive them out of the country losing essential natural resources.¹⁰ Unfortunately, bad leaders usually do not operate in a vacuum. Their influence creates bad domestic problems, our next topic.

Bad Domestic Problems

Domestic problems, specifically economic growth and distribution of wealth, are crucial elements in analyzing internal conflict. Examples, like Finland, have proven that for political stability, ethnically homogenous populations can withstand significant economic downturns without resorting to domestic or internal violence. Conversely, Indonesia and the Ukraine, illustrate how multi-ethnic populations, like those in the CAS, will tend to remain at peace only as long as there are continued economic benefits to do so. Succinctly put by LTC Forrest Wentworth, Air Command and Staff College instructor:

“People focus on how many GI Joes and Barbie dolls they can buy their kids for Christmas, both this year and next, rather than historical hatred.”

These “GI Joes and Barbie dolls” have been increasingly tough to come by in Central Asia. Loss of subsidies from Moscow, government inefficiencies, and a reluctance on the part of foreigners to invest here has made economic growth elusive. So why has there not been large-scale violence? Combining the ideas of Lake and Rothchild's with Wentworth's, the tremendous

potential for economic growth, particularly energy-based progress, keeps most of the states in balance.

Other domestic issues contributing to the ripeness for conflict in the region include changing demographic patterns, exclusionary national policies, and failure to modernize institutions and industry. In total, domestic issues shape ethnic group perceptions and expectations for the future. In the CAS, these expectations are regional since policies and expectations in any of the individual CAS affect groups throughout the “neighborhood.” This neighborhood poses unique and dangerous challenges for each of the CAS.

Bad Neighbors and Neighborhoods

There are few more difficult situations than being a Newly Independent State (NIS) situated in the middle of religious, ethnic, and power play areas. Formative governments, exploitable natural resources, low levels of security, and newly acquired freedoms, make this entire area attractive for forces both inside the Central Asian neighborhood and bordering it.

Starting from the north, the Russians have exerted pressure to maintain the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Security Arrangement and have managed to keep all but Uzbekistan within its framework. Russian influence or lack of decisive intervention has, in most opinions, kept the civil war in Tajikistan going.¹¹ Kazakh concern that its Russian minority was susceptible to breakaway tendencies was so strong that they moved their capitol hundreds of miles north from Almaty to Astana, in a “flag-planting” maneuver.

Moving east, Turkish influence of their ethnically-related brothers has been moderated by a weak Turkish economy, their own ethnic problems with Kurds and Bulgars, and their preoccupation with the European Union. Graham Fuller, a political scientist at RAND, states:

A strengthening in nationalist forces within Central Asia will benefit Turkey. Over the long run, Turkish influence will probably increase rather than decrease.

For this reason it is expected that Turkey can be expected to play a stronger role in democratization in the region in the expectation that it will lead to greater Turkish influence as nationalists have a chance to gain power.¹²

This relationship has been significantly enhanced by the recent agreements on oil pipelines.

Continuing to the south, Iranian influence, strongest in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, has had limited success. An important concept, often overlooked is the fact that Iran and Pakistan are mainly Shia Muslim, a sect that promotes fundamentalism whereas, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the majority of NIS are Sunni Muslim, a sect that tends toward secularism in government. These forces counterbalance each other. Iranian interests here include the division of the Caspian Sea and oil pipeline projects. With Iran distracted by current government unrest between its Supreme Leader and President, Mujahadeen-e-Khalk attacks, and its immediate concerns in Afghanistan, it has had little time to devote in exporting fundamentalism to the CAS.¹³ Some believe that once Iran's current regime is stabilized, its influence will be tied to Iraq's. In the scenario where Iraq is dismembered or crippled by American efforts, Iran will concentrate on expanding its influence in the north, thus prompting possible Russian retaliation.¹⁴ With that said, Russian voting patterns regarding UN sanctions on Iraq can be better understood by CENTCOM as voting for their interests rather than voting against ours. This sustains political room for maneuver and military cooperation in the region.

Afghan and Pakistani borders bound the southeast CAS. Although the self-proclaimed Taleban supported by the Pakistanis remain a source of fundamentalism in Tajikistan, the legitimate Afghan government group, lodged in the Ferghana Valley, is their dominant concern.¹⁵ Significant issues in this part of the neighborhood include porous borders allowing sanctuary, insurgent infiltration routes, arms trade, and drug routes. A glaring example of this is in the Uzbek Foreign Minister's recent revelation that 400 Uzbek and Tajik guerrillas were

trained in Afghan and Pakistani training camps and then infiltrated into Uzbekistan via Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.¹⁶

Moving eastward, China, particularly the Xinjiang province, shores up the last boundary of the “neighborhood.” This province shapes Kazakh opinion on China as it once was a Turkic Mongol independent culture and is ethnically similar to other CAS with its Uighers (....).¹⁷ Although the Chinese province presents economic opportunities, it also resurrects Kazakh fears of Chinese expansionism and religious oppression. Contention for Chinese influence here is undoubtedly based in economics but may be rooted in their desire to maintain a western lever against the underbelly of Russia.

The “neighbors” have been cooperative with each other thus far; especially those rooted in the ancient Ferghana Valley.¹⁸ Treaties of eternal friendship between Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, the Shanghai-Five (Russia-China-Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan), CIS, and NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) operations illustrate varying degrees of CAS interdependence. These bonds, however, are showing signs of weakness. The Humanitarian Times reports:

For the Ferghana valley’s highly integrated regional economy, the policies implemented by the three governments have had a detrimental impact. Customs controls, establishment of separate currencies and differences in rates and means of economic liberalization tear at the fabric which has woven the Valley together over centuries.¹⁹

Essentially, the neighborhood has remained porous yet respectful of diasporas located within each other’s sovereign borders. What happens when this changes?

Ethnic Composition and Diasporas

Diasporas or ethnic groups trapped or dispersed inside another country, have historically been the scapegoats for violence like Hitler’s “Anschluss” policy, Soviet action in Poland, and

even French involvement in Algeria. Illustrated in Appendix A, this region, ethnically “composed” by the Soviets is incredibly susceptible to nationalist leaders who would try to “rescue” their trapped countrymen in a neighboring state. Stephen Van Evera, from MIT’s Security Studies Program, notes that

Minority oppressing nationalism can cause war in two ways: by provoking secessions by its captive nations, or spurring the homelands of these captive nations to move forcefully to free their oppressed co-nationals. [This] is most dangerous if the oppressed minorities have nearby friends who have the capacity to protect the oppressed nation by force.²⁰

From the discussions earlier, every nation in the CAS seems to have a “friend” to back them up. The weight of these friends and the likelihood of their involvement in an ever-expanding conflict makes CENTCOM’s success here crucial.

Why This Spells Bad News

According to the “New World Coming” Report, the first report of the US commission on National Security for the 21st Century foresees:

An increase in the rise of suppressed nationalism, ethnic or religious violence, humanitarian disasters, major catalytic regional crises, and the spread of dangerous weapons. Most violence will erupt due to internal conflicts in existing states. As more and more people learn about the state of life in the rest of the world they will be less tolerant of their own oppressive or incompetent leaders.²¹

The Hart-Rudman Commission’s documented projections for conflict in the ensuing 25 years, reflects problems related to Central Asia as well as the possibility of US intervention in that region. As a matter of fact, more than half of the 14 basic conclusions apply to the US view of Central Asia:

- Rapid advances in info/biotechnology will create new vulnerabilities for US security.
- New technologies will divide the world as well as draw it together.
- Energy will continue to have major strategic significance.
- All borders will be more porous; some will bend and others will break.
- The sovereignty of states will come under pressure but will endure.

- Fragmentation/failure of states will occur, with destabilizing effects on neighboring states.
- Foreign crises will be replete with atrocities and the terrorizing of civilian populations.
- The essence of war will not change.
- Intel will face more challenging adversaries, and excellent intel will not prevent surprises.
- The US will be called upon frequently to intervene militarily in a time of uncertain alliances and with the prospect of fewer forward-deployed forces.
- The emerging security environment in the next quarter century will require different military and other national capabilities.²²

So what is the most likely direction conflict will take in Central Asia? The primary source of conflict will be ethnic conflict generated from spillover from neighboring Central Asian States. The porous, bending, and breaking described by the Hart-Rudman Commission allows tremendous political, religious, and military influence to transcend borders. The Afghan and Tajik refugee problems, present examples where pressure and demographic balances in certain pockets are changing, leading to the majority's widening fears as to the security of their future.

Spillover from neighboring countries here is inevitable unless all these states can effectively seal their borders. Although a daunting task, the cost of doing so may be national survival itself. Michael Brown uses a 1970 example to illustrate. Here, Prince Hussein expelled radical Palestinians from Jordan, with most resettling in Lebanon where Christian-Muslim tensions were already mounting. These fighters mixed with refugees may have been the sparks that triggered the start of the Lebanese civil war.²³ More recently, US concern for the "allocation" of Albanian Kosovar refugees proves that they are using lessons learned. Effective border control is a tool to diffuse potential ethnic spillover, and hence, can become a means to prevent violence.

In Van Evera's "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War" he notes that the potential for nationalistic conflict between states can be checked partly by looking at the defensibility of ones' borders, their international legitimacy, and the degree of correspondence between political and ethnic boundaries.²⁴ These three characteristics immediately sound the warning horn in Central

Asia. First, as seen by the number of conquerors in this region, the borders of any of these five countries can be defined as indefensible. This fact tends to lead to the conclusion that all of the countries should feel insecure. But taking Van Evera's comments one step further, it may lead all of them to feel more secure since they all have vulnerabilities similar in nature. These security dilemmas could raise tensions in the region if one of the states develops an unmatched military capability. The next point, international legitimacy, can be illustrated in the Rand-McNalley map denoting "Border in dispute with China" throughout the area. Significant steps have been taken to eliminate this problem: There are currently no boundary disputes between the five nations.²⁵ Lastly, corresponding ethnic and political boundaries have historically caused ethnic conflict.²⁶ Specifically, African decolonializing this century has seen widespread ethnic violence caused by the European created border demarcations.²⁷ Unmatched tribal and geographic boundaries triggered internal ethnic conflict and spillover from their diasporas in the neighboring countries. Theorist Samuel Huntington describes these lines as cultural "fault lines" around which the world is built. He says, fault lines that run *through* countries rather than *along* their political borders create torn countries that have traditionally been ripe for conflict. Due to the nomadic nature of the Central Asian peoples the fault line has to be based on the boundary of Orthodox and Muslim influence.²⁸ But as ethnic Russians and Germans repatriate, this fault line shifts northward even though political borders are not changing. Unlike the results of poor line correlation in west Africa, Van Evera observes that "the peaceful dissolution of the former Soviet Union was thus a mixed blessing: its successor states emerged without violence, but with borders that captured unhappy diasporas behind them."²⁹ In a few cases, especially in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, small enclaves or autonomous regions have been developed for

these “captured” diasporas. Unsettling, though, is the fact that there are no Russian enclaves. This may reinforce Russian minority fears for their future.

In summary, this region has all the elements that have historically caused ethnic conflict. Indeed some authors say that the “Complex problems of the Caspian Region could, if left to fester, make the Balkans look like a pre-game warm-up.”³⁰ CENTCOM decision-makers must understand this context to be able to analyze and operate in this complex but valuable region.

Notes

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³ *History of Central Asia*. n.p.; on-line. Internet, 5 Dec 1999, available from <http://members.tripod.com/~kz2000/history/centas.html>.

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⁷ Brown, Michael. “Causes and Regional Dimensions of Internal Conflict”, *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (The Center for Science and National Affairs, 1996) 577.

⁸ Ibid, 578.

⁹ Ibid, 574.

¹⁰ Library of Congress Country studies gave great statistical data. “Table 3. Central Asia: Population Distribution 1989-1992 (in thousands).” n.p. on-line. Internet, 15 Nov 1999, available at http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/uzbekistan/uz_appen.html.

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¹¹ Escudero, Stanley and Roy, Olivier. *Special Report on Tajikistan: The War in Tajikistan Three Years On* (Washington, DC.: US Institute of Peace).

¹² Fuller, Graham. “Central Asia: The Quest for Identity,” *Current History*, (Apr 1994), 148.

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¹⁴ “Fundamentalist Threat Rising In Central Asia.” n.p on-line. Internet, 9 Feb 2000, available from <http://www.stratfor.com/services/giu/021898.asp>.

¹⁵ The Jamiat-i-Islami (Society of Islam) led by Burhaniddin Rabanni and his Defense Minister,

Notes

Ahmad Shah Massoud, are the legitimate recognized government of Afghanistan. Tart, William M. "Afghanistan: Same as it Ever Was." Written 20 Jan 2000 to fulfill partial completion of American Military University course LC508.

¹⁶ "Fundamentalist Threat Rising In Central Asia."

¹⁷ Fuller, 149.

¹⁸ Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. Lubin, Martin, Rubin. "Calming the Ferghana Valley" written for the Council on Foreign Relations, (New York, NY.; Century Foundation Press, 1999).

¹⁹ Lubin, Martin, Rubin.

²⁰ van evera, 266.

²¹ Grier, Peter. "New World Coming." *Air Force Magazine* (Dec 1999), 59-62.

²² Grier, Peter. "New World Coming." *Air Force Magazine* (Dec 1999), 59-62.

²³ Browne, 465.

²⁴ van Evera, 273.

²⁵ discussions between China and Kyr/Kz

²⁶ Don't know yet.....corresponding boundaries

²⁷ African decolonial stuff

²⁸ That line, generally speaking, can be drawn east-west through Kazakhstan. Huntington, Samuel P. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993), 17-19.

²⁹ van Evera, 274.

³⁰ Jaffe, Amy Myers and Robert A. Manning. "The Shocks of a World of Cheap Oil." *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2000) 16-29.

Part 3

Framing the Context: Identifying US Interests

Our nation's central challenge – and our responsibility – is to sustain the role of the world's most powerful force for peace, prosperity, and the universal values of democracy and freedom by seizing opportunities of this new global era for the benefit of our own people and people around the world.¹

To analyze the importance of Central Asia with regard to US interests, the starting point must be national policies. This Part discusses stated interests in the CAS focusing on weapons of mass destruction (WMD), natural resources, drug smuggling, US influence and credibility, and humanitarian issues. First, we will start with the National Security Strategy (NSS).

Current National Security Strategy

The NSS stratifies US interests into three broad categories: (1) vital, (2) important, and finally, (3) humanitarian and other interests. A quick review of these will help frame the CAS.

Vital interests

Vital interests are defined as broad, overriding importance to the survival, safety, and vitality of our nation.² They include:

- Physical security of our territory and that of our allies
- The safety of our citizens
- The economic well-being of our society
- The protection of critical infrastructures from paralyzing attack

The vital interests in this region include WMD, terrorists, and the immense strategic resources of the CAS (e.g. oil, natural gas, uranium, etc.). The CAS also includes *important* US interests.

Important Interest

These interests do not affect our national survival, but rather, our national well-being and the character of the world in which we live.³ Defined in this manner, important interests include:

- Regions which we have a sizable economic stake or commitments to allies
- Protecting the global environment from severe harm
- Crises with a potential to generate substantial and highly destabilizing refugee flows

Important US interests in the CAS are drug trafficking, civil wars in Afghanistan and Tajikistan, and Iranian influence.⁴ Wrapping up the three levels of US interests, we will cover humanitarian and other interests.

Humanitarian and Other Interests

Acting because our values demand it, these tertiary interests may be framed as:⁵

- Response to natural and man-made disasters
- Promoting human rights and seeking halts to gross violations of those rights
- Supporting democratization
- Adherence to the rule of law and civilian control of the military
- Assistance in humanitarian demining
- Promoting sustainable development and environmental protection

US interests that fall into this category include disaster preparedness, democratic reform, legal reform, the inclusion of the NIS into the World Trade Organization, and US/foreign investment.⁶

With the background complete, the following pages discuss the vital interests of WMD proliferation and natural resources; the important interest of drug smuggling, criminal activity, and US influence; and concludes with the tertiary interest of humanitarian issues in the CAS.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

WMD, according to the NSS, poses “the greatest potential threat to global stability and security.”⁷ Although 1995 marked the establishment of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone, security at previous nuclear, chemical, and biological laboratories and the whereabouts of their resident experts has come into question. Ethnic conflict, the resulting government destabilization, and lax security could mean a fire sale of deadly weapons and materials for any entity hostile to the United States and its allies. Once in possession of WMD, groups mired in a fight for their sheer existence may use the materials in numerous ways:

- Direct use on the opposing ethnic groups or ruling government.
- Threaten WMD use as a deterrent for international intervention.
- Use or threatened use of WMD internationally as a cry for intervention.
- Selling the material to finance their struggle, because they have no means of application.
- Serve as a transit route (safer than Europe) for smuggled Russian WMD material.

From the CAS government side of the equation, there is a potential “win-win” situation for the regimes. Getting rid of the WMD and the capability to produce such materials is unquestionably in the CAS’s best interest. Since the price CAS governments would pay for using these weapons is prohibitively high, they might as well get the most out of discarding them.

Use or threatened use of these weapons by legitimate governments would promote international alienation much like it has with Iraqi chemical attacks in the 1980s.⁸ In these developing states, positive international attention replete with economic and diplomatic benefits remains a necessity. Any form of sanctions would crush economic growth, thus exacerbating hopes for a brighter future. Currently, sanctions and US policy on Tajikistan have limited US military engagement there, thus reducing shaping options.

WMD use by government forces on any specific ethnic group, regardless of insurgent identity, would tend to escalate neighboring country’s concerns for their diasporas. These types

of atrocities and their tremendous killing capability would demand quick military responses from their protectorate nations before their entire diaspora was exterminated.

The most likely step for the current regimes is selling the material for nation-building funds. Unfortunately, current intelligence cannot identify all of the buyers and the US pullout and sanctioning of Tajikistan and Kazakhstan has created intelligence shortfalls in this subject. Of the two countries, Kazakh WMD capabilities are the most worrisome. Noted in Appendix B, the Kazakh regime possesses components of a WMD capability: they control former Soviet labs, scientists, fissile material, and production facilities. This is not a country that the US can afford to disengage. Previous programs administered under the Department of State's Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (CTR) have included highly enriched uranium (HEU) buys, funding scientist relocations to the United States, and enhanced security protection measures. All of these are profitable endeavors for the countries involved.⁹

The real possibilities of the CAS being a transit route from Russia to the Middle East or South Asia can present terrible consequences for US security. On this issue the problems lie with porous borders and total disengagement in the entry and two avenues of exit for the materials. In late 1999, the United States suspended relations with Kazakhstan due to the sale of MiG-21s to North Korea. Although the delivery was turned around and the personnel were recently tried and imprisoned, CENTCOM's ability to engage here remains on hold.¹⁰ This attitude reduces our shaping options, strains our intelligence capabilities, and reduces US credibility in this first stop of WMD material out of Russia. US isolation of Tajikistan also allows the trade route to continue unimpeded with possible outlets into China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran. Of those, lack of US engagement in all but China, allows little involvement or interdiction along this WMD smuggling route. Additionally, without US

economic involvement in these countries, what profession would bring more money than WMD smuggling? What is the risk-reward equation in life and resources of an Iranian WMD threat versus the cost of the US normalization of diplomatic ties? Although changing current US policy is beyond the purview of the military, DoS and DoD should consider two significant factors: (1) MiG-21s that never made it to their destination are far easier to defend against than a WMD device obtained in Kazakhstan and (2) the military's ability to engage in the region depends on on-scene intelligence and good relationships between US forces and the host nation. Allowing CENTCOM activities to resume in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan enables an effective arm of American influence. That influence is not only focused on defending the United States and our allies, but promoting US prosperity. The next block discusses the payoff of a stable, prosperous Central Asia.

Resources

We are focusing particular attention on investment in Caspian energy resources and their export from the region to world markets, thereby expanding and diversifying world energy supplies and promoting prosperity in the region. Development of Caspian energy resources will improve our energy security...¹¹

Energy resources in this area are staggering. Comparable in quantity to United States and North Sea oil reserves, Caspian Sea reserves exist mostly offshore and remain unexplored. Even more impressive are the natural gas possibilities. Looking at proven reserves, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan each rank among the world's 20 largest natural gas countries and match North America's tremendous reserves.¹²

Two positive effects of these resources exist. First, the abundant resources, given a stable and beneficial price of crude oil, contribute to economic development, enhancing prosperity and stability. Second, there is regional unity on both sides of the Caspian due to interconnecting

production and transporting mechanisms. However, there are also two possible negatives associated with these resources. First, the imbalance of wealth among the CAS based on petroleum revenues will tend to alienate Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and make the vision of a unified economic region difficult. Currently, Kyrgyzstan overcomes the appearance of the laggard by maintaining the fastest pace in economic reforms and the lead in industry, hydroelectric power, and water resources. Kyrgyzstan could be locked into the future of the region with an investment in refining technology or becoming a crucial route in pipelines taking oil and gas to China. The second negative is the attention of having resources that everyone wants. Powerful forces from the United States, Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, and multi-national energy companies have increased the choices available for Caspian region governments. The gravity of decisions regarding what routes to traverse and where to drill for these resources have implications for US and allied national security. For the United States, these specifics present strategic centers of gravity that must be defended. The first of these specifics is oil and natural gas.

Oil and Natural Gas

For years Middle Eastern countries have projected their defense build-ups and social programs based on crude oil prices per barrel. Until recently, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) surpluses, a slowing rate of energy consumption, and other energy markets have kept the price of oil below the targets that would create the defense budgets of a regional military giant. In fact even if the recent upsurge of crude prices continues, it will probably take years to erase the debts accrued during the 1990s. During this time, the United States may continue to be the dominant source of defense and security for the region. Aside from the defense issues, another problem is the stymied the growth of these oil-rich states.

But the future looks bright. Since independence, the CAS has moved to achieve economic prosperity built on energy revenues. Making energy their priority, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have increased their oil production significantly.¹³ One under performer, Kazakhstan has seen a slump in production and slower than expected exploitation of its offshore potential.¹⁴ Overall, combined 1997 CAS oil production from the Caspian was respectable, but still dwarfed by OPEC leaders like Saudi Arabia and Iran (see Table 1). Essential to US National Security, extra producers help stabilize world market through increased market competition and expanded choices.¹⁵

Producer	Total Oil Reserves (billion barrels)	Total Oil Production (barrels per day)	Total Gas Reserves (trillion cubic feet)	Total Gas Production (billion cubic feet/yr)
Iran ¹⁶	12 bbls	N/A	0 Tcf	0 bcf
Russia	5 bbls	60,000 bls	N/A	N/A
Kazakhstan	95-103 bbls	573,300 bls	53-83 Tcf	215.4
Turkmenistan	34 bbls	107,300 bls	98-155 Tcf	610.9
Uzbekistan	1 bbl	182,400 bls	74-88 Tcf	1808.1

Table 1. CAS Oil/Gas Statistics¹⁷

CAS natural gas looks similar, again with Uzbekistan the standout in production increases. Crippled with Russian bureaucratic links, Kazakh natural gas production is not near its potential. Similarly, Turkmenistan, with the world's third largest proven natural gas reserves, until recently tied to Russian transport methods, has not even begun any form of exploration. Uzbekistan, on the other hand, has become the world's eighth largest producer through active production and exploration.¹⁸ These illustrate some of the problems with getting to the reserves, but not the only ones.

Another major issue confronting the CAS is the transportation and refining aspects of the energy market. Until recently, privatized Russian firms like Gazprom and Lukeoil have monopolized energy through previous refining agreements and tremendous transport and

conversion fees.¹⁹ With increased international attention and significant investment by the major oil companies, CAS oil producers have begun to learn the intricacies of international free markets. Many of the state run oil, gas, coal, and mineral companies have already privatized or formed joint ventures with Western or Middle Eastern firms.²⁰ Still, these are limited facilities, both in number of plants and production capacities.²¹ Overall, this region and the stability of its economies will take off provided a guaranteed security of the system and improvements in the production and distribution systems (See Appendix C). But oil and gas are not the only assets in Central Asia. The next important resource is strategic minerals.

Strategic minerals

The last of the resources that bears on the strategic nature of the region is Uranium. Found mainly in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan it is found in significant quantity. Specifically, Uzbekistan is the seventh largest uranium producer, producing over 5% of world output with plans to double that by the end of 2000.²² This is a staggering statistic, but is overshadowed with the fact that both nations possess the ability to make their raw uranium into weapons grade or HEU.²³ Since 1991, DoS purchases of HEU through CTR funds have been significant. The US needs to understand that it cannot buy 38,000 metric tons and should instead focus on the dismantling of the HEU process that actually makes the resource militarily relevant.

Implications for Future Conflict

So what could ethnic conflict have to do with natural resources? There are three main dynamics or outcomes that should be considered in regards to a continued stable production of CAS energy resources.

First, as mentioned earlier, other states in the region may feel threatened by a “rich” neighbor. Unless oil-rich Central Asian States find ways to include their poorer neighbors and

thus, different ethnic groups, through joint ventures, or a regional “profit-sharing” structure, there is great possibility of this resource imbalance to create a security dilemma. Surely, the oil-rich nations will feel the need to protect their borders, energy industries, and cultures. Buying arms to do so may be perceived as the precursor to an arms race that the others would have to match or counter through strategic alliances. Some of the agreements discussed earlier like Uzbek-Kyrg-Kazakh eternal friendship declaration and the CIS security arrangement make great strides in limiting this effect. US decisions regarding military aid should consider this effect very seriously.

Second, ethnic conflict caused by spillover would involve guerilla forces operating outside one country and striking targets within another. An oil-dependent CAS would be a tremendous target for guerillas. The asymmetry of a small band destroying or “holding hostage” a refinery or a key pipeline would be catastrophic for any of the three oil-producing nations.

Lastly, with so many outside entities interested in the energy resources in the region, foreign governments may be quicker to intervene in unstable situations basing their justification on ethnicity rather than their interest in energy. Governments interested in either disrupting or destroying oil production in the region may also use ethnic conflict as a means to introduce agents or insurgents to do their “dirty work.” Likely suspects would be the contenders for energy dominance in the region like Iran and other Caspian Sea players. In constructive moves the United States has announced backing for many projects that create interdependent relations like pipelines from Turkmenistan to Turkey and Uzbekistan to Azerbaijan that will dampen animosity between Caspian Region producers. Currently, the main issue between the Trans-Caspian nations is the actual post-Soviet era division of the Caspian and ownership of offshore drilling and exploration areas. This issue, although divisive, has not resulted in violence or

subversion by any Caspian players. These energy and minerals are tangible interests in Central Asia. Our next interest will be a non-tangible one—influence and credibility—and remains one that guides US policy everywhere.

Influence and Credibility

US engagement in Central Asia is a security imperative. Encouraging stability and integration of the CAS into world political and economic organizations only strengthens US security.²⁴ Examples of this are evident in the successful American backing of Kyrgyzstan into the World Trade Organization and the integration of all five countries into NATO's Partnership for Peace program.²⁵ All of the CAS are currently members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and have welcomed their participation in election monitoring.²⁶

The Shanghai-Five (Russia-China-Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan) and the CIS security arrangements are organizations that can be interpreted many ways in terms of US security. First, the Shanghai Five feels that they dominate the Central Asian landscape, thus, they feel secure against US intervention in the region. They also stabilize the region since it combines China and Russia into a single powerful group. Other alliances like the informal agreements between Iran and China tend to counterbalance possible Russian adventurism in the name of helping ethnic Russians. The CIS security arrangement seems to have a stabilizing effect in these developing nations by providing time for nation-building. As seen in Vietnam, there was no "winning the hearts and minds" of the populace by the US Operations Mission or US Military Assistance Programs without the element of security.²⁷ The last dynamic, Iranian-Russian relations, centers around Iranian "direct dialogue with Moscow about their mutual interest in preventing the Turks from making greater inroads into Central Asia."²⁸

US influence in the region is hampered by access to the area and, in some cases, failure to engage. World opinion on US credibility is always at stake in situations that the US disengages in, especially if ethnic conflict or the perception of ethnic-based conflict is present. Abroad, US activities in backing Israeli policies in southern Lebanon can be perceived as hypocritical when measured against US lack of action in the Islamic fundamentalists versus the secularists in this region. US sanctions on Kazakhstan for a sale of virtually insignificant MiG-21s to North Korea may contrast sharply with US inaction against Israel in response to Patriot technology transfers to Iran. Although many in the CAS are Soviet-era thinkers who see the US as the entity who forced them to endure Soviet leadership's demands for more production and less freedom, most nations and their media are reportedly pro-West.²⁹ They strive to gain access to Western markets, consumer goods, and freedoms. This is America's chance to give it to them. In return, the United States will build credibility and influence while enhancing US and CAS security against threats like the trans-national issue of drug smuggling.

Drug Smuggling

Since Afghan "freedom fighters" supposedly financed their struggle with drug money, it would not be surprising that CAS insurgents would do the same. Ethnic Uzbek insurgents, Tajik fighters, and Islamic fundamentalists are profiting from poor border security, economic conditions, and growing world demand for illegal drugs. This demand takes Central/South Asian cannabis, opium, and heroin and distributes it into Russia/Western Europe.³⁰ Since devout Muslims do not use drugs, CAS drugs are similar to oil resources—they remain totally dependent on successful transport onto world markets. In essence, lax border security and corruption means that a tremendous amount of illegal drugs and dollars enter Russia, destabilizing an economy that the US and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are keeping afloat.

The US Drug Enforcement Agency's new field office in Uzbekistan suggests that a significant amount of drugs moves through the region.³¹ The Afghan lesson taught Tajiks that through eradication, the government could deny opium profits to insurgents in their Khulyabi-Khojand civil war.³² In the long-run, failure to aid CAS governments in this mission and border issues means that all US instruments of power will cost more and take longer to achieve the desired effect against movements or ethnic groups that are well-armed and financed. Those well armed groups can also turn an illegal drug trade in ethnic conflict and a humanitarian nightmare.

Humanitarian Tragedy/Ethnic Cleansing

Seen in the Balkans and Central Africa, humanitarian tragedies like ethnic cleansing present the United States with difficult choices. Although US leaders tend to base their involvement on the Weinberger-Powell principles, the immense public outcry "to do something" creates a dangerous condition for prolonged military action. Could ethnic cleansing occur in Central Asia? According to Fialkoff Bell, a >>>>>>,

Cleansing is most likely to occur in situations of (1) sudden reversals of status; (2) loss of social, economic, or political advantages; & (3) the presence of ethnic allies across new borders. Solutions to the problems of cleansing must consider (A) the creation of stable & recognizable borders; (B) a geographic distribution of minorities; (C) numerical strength; & (D) the rate of growth of each ethnic population.³³

The issue of stable and secure borders is paramount, as is the geographic distribution of minorities. Throughout the CAS, minorities have grouped themselves into tight enclaves that may even speak a different language than their surrounding countrymen. Enclaves like these have been, in some cases, turned into autonomous regions attached to a "mother country." However, the fact that they are numerically strong within a sovereign country makes them vulnerable to majority reprisals like ethnic cleansing. A probable scenario that meets the

conditions above would be a sudden shift to fundamentalist governments. This would be a “reversal,” definitely a “loss of advantage” to all those outside of the religion. The movement would undoubtedly have “ethnic allies” across their borders. An example “ripe” for an ethnic expulsion is where Uzbekistan’s President stated that:

“We do not want a Islamic state as a neighbor.” Tajikistan has taken its Islamic opposition into a coalition government, a move which will inevitably shift the politics of the country and which relieves the Tajik Islamic militants to carry their movement into Uzbekistan (and its 6% ethnic Tajik population).³⁴

Overall, ethnic cleansing presents a real problem in terms of the speed of decisions required and then the speed of implementation of any US response. US commitment to action and end-states must be considered prior to deployment or even suggestions of troops. Unlike Kosovo, the extreme distances, the limited methods of resupply and the possibility of intervention by more international players will make any hesitation to act a decision in itself.

So what can CENTCOM do? CENTCOM must first understand the context it is operating in, make smart decisions regarding engagement that emphasizes regional bonds and focuses on the stated US interests here. The CAS is a valuable region both in payoff and protection and CENTCOM must take the lead in suggesting options to both defend and promote US interests.

Notes

¹ The White House. The National Security Strategy for the New Century. (The White House), 1-3.

² Ibid, 1.

³ Ibid, 2.

⁴ Ibid, 2.

⁵ Ibid, 2.

⁶ Ibid, 3.

⁷ Ibid, 3.

⁸ Iraqi’s ostracized by world

⁹ As a matter of fact, significant CTR funds have already been spent just in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. With the remaining former Soviet nuclear weapons in storage in Uzbekistan and the growing legacy of environmental issues surrounding Soviet WMD programs in Kazakhstan,

Notes

both countries have requested increases in CTR funding for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, some of the funding is requested for clean-up of previous WMD facilities.

¹⁰ Chief of Staff of the Army Ertaev and businessman Petrenko went on trial and were convicted in January 2000. Ertaev implicated the former prime minister but no charges were filed. The complete story of the transaction is on this web site. "The High Price of Kazakhstan's MiG Affair." n.p. on-line. Internet, 5 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.stratfor.com/services/giu/111899.asp>.

¹¹ NSS, 33.

¹² Oil reserves: US (22 billion barrels), North Sea (17 billion barrels); the entire Caspian Sea region estimates (16-32 billion barrels). Natural gas proven reserves: North America (300 trillion cubic feet) Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (236-337 trillion cubic feet). "Caspian Region." n.p. on-line. Internet, 5 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.eia.doe.org/emeu/cabs/caspian.html> and "Caspian Tables, Maps." n.p. on-line. Internet, 5 Jan 2000, available at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/caspgrph.html>.

¹³ Uzbekistan increased its oil production by over 91,000 barrels per day in only 5 years while Turkmenistan added 23,000 barrels per day to its output over an eight year period. "Caspian Sea Region" same as above and "Turkmenistan." n.p. on-line. Internet, 5 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/turkmen.html> and "Uzbekistan." n.p. on-line. Internet, 5 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/uzbek.html>

¹⁴ Kazakhstan has seen a slump by 30,000 barrels a day over the past 7 years. "Caspian Tables, Maps" (see above) and "Kazakhstan." n.p. on-line. Internet, 5 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/kazakh.html>

¹⁵ 1997 CAS oil production from the Caspian was a respectable 763,000 barrels a day. "Caspian Tables, Maps" (see above).

¹⁶ Iranian values only reflect oil and natural gas from the Iranian section of the Caspian Sea.

¹⁷ "Caspian Sea Region." (see above) and Table 1.2 OPEC Crude Oil Production." n.p. on-line. Internet, 5 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/ipsr/t12.txt>

¹⁸ Turkmenistan with the world's third largest natural gas reserves behind Russia and Qatar. "Turkmenistan." (see above)

¹⁹ "Kazakhstan." (see above)

²⁰ From Chinese and American joint-ventures that have developed agreements to build the world's longest pipeline, a natural gas pipeline to a Chinese coastal port to the Japanese, German, US, Korean, and Swiss refurbishment tenders on CAS refineries, there is widespread evidence of international interest. "Caspian Sea Region." (see above)

²¹ Although critical to the stability of their economies, these refineries are not state of the art and have hurt overall CAS production. Kazakhstan has 3 refineries undergoing various stages of upgrades. They have changed hands numerous times due to improprieties and legal issues. Here, poor performance of oil and the output and transport fees by KazakhOil and KazTransOil (both ex-Soviet style firms) hurt profits. Learning their lesson from this dependence, Kazakhstan is building a natural gas liquification plant in conjunction with Phillips and a new gas processing plant in order to limit Russian Gazprom influence. For its role, Turkmenistan has only two refineries and they are engaged with the French to build a new lubricant blending facility at the port city of Turkmenbashi. Lastly, Uzbekistan has two older refineries and 1 newer refinery that was built since the break up. They have a brand new petrochemical plant and, innovatively,

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they plan to have 360 compressed natural gas filling stations by 2004 to take advantage of their immense gas resource. "Turkmenistan," "Kazakhstan," and "Uzbekistan." (see above).

²² Uzbek produced over 1700 metric tons in 1997. They will almost double that in 2000 with a proposed 3000 metric tons of 38,000 tons of reserves. "Uzbekistan." (see above).

²³ Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (CANWFZ), n.p. on-line. Internet, 12 March 2000, available from <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/canwfz/>

²⁴ NSS, 2.

²⁵ White House, 33.

²⁶ CIA factbook 1999. The OSCE's field office and base of operations in the CAS is in Kyrgyzstan. "Kyrgyzstan." CIA World Factbook, n.p. on-line. Internet, 3 Feb 2000, available from <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/kg.html>

²⁷ Tanham, George. *War Without Guns: American Civilians in Rural Vietnam*. (New York, NY.: Praeger Publishers, 1966) 23-30.

²⁸ Olivier Roy is former head of the OSCE mission to Dushanbe. Escudero, Stanley and Olivier Roy. "The War in Tajikistan 3 Years On." n.p. on-line. Internet, 20 Nov 1999, available from <http://www.usip.org/oc/sr/tajik2.html>.

²⁹ media ratings in CENTCOM docs.

³⁰ Drug trafficking route

³¹ dea web site. Particular problems are with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

³² Escudero and Roy. n.p.

³³ Bell, Fialkoff A. *Ethnic cleansing*. (New York, NY.: St Martin's Press, 1996).

³⁴ "Fundamentalist Threat Rising In Central Asia." n.p on-line. Internet, 9 Feb 2000, available from <http://www.stratfor.com/services/giu/021898.asp>.

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¹ Sisk, Timothy D. *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts* (New York, NY.; Carnegie Corporation, 1996), 87.

² Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *National Military Strategy*. Washington, DC., 11.

³ "National Guard Bureau International Affairs Central Command Theater Overview." n.p. on-line. Internet, 30 Dec 1999, available from

http://www.ngb.dtic.mil/bureau/ochief/ia/centcom_ovrview1.html.

Part 4

Applying the NMS: Shaping CENTCOM Strategy

What stands out is just how ineffective the international community has been in imposing a modicum of civility on even those small states one might have thought it was in a position to coerce. Actually when states themselves have taken the initiative, they have done better--which suggests that these domestic problems are best handled domestically, although they are rarely handled well at all.¹

US National Military Strategy (NMS)

Derived from the NSS, the NMS outlines the imperatives of military engagement. More clearly the strategy stresses military roles in terms of *shaping* the international environment, *responding* to a full spectrum of crises, and *preparing now* for an uncertain future.² In each case, military engagement requires commitment and perseverance for success. This commitment must be across the entire spectrum of the national instruments of power (IOPs). In diplomatic situations like Tajikistan and Kazakhstan where the DoD is not engaged, the US State Department loses the leverage of military funding, manpower, and materiel in shaping the environment. Regardless of how much preparing a CINC may do, the respond phase, which may have been avoidable, may now be more costly in terms of US lives and resources than if the military was fully engaged in shaping from the start.

CENTCOM Specifics

Transferred from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to CENTCOM, the CAS present unique challenges. Some of the most pronounced ethnic tensions, coupled with historical animosity, international power plays, and abundant WMD facilities, situated in a resource rich, underdeveloped region, make it imperative that CENTCOM develop a successful strategy for Central Asia. Unfortunately, the resources have not come along with this need. According to Major Steve Latchford, two personnel billets and only a modest increase in Traditional CINC Activities funds transferred with this five-nation responsibility. Luckily, National Guard Bureau (NGB) country programs (See Table 2) developed in the early 1990s absorbed some of the shortfall through mil-mil contact and educational visits.

National Guard	Partner Country
Arizona	Kazakhstan
Louisiana	Uzbekistan
Montana	Kyrgyzstan
Nevada	Turkmenistan

Table 2. National Guard Partnerships with CAS³

Future CENTCOM operations in the region will have to make the most out of well-informed planning and interagency cooperation, specifically with the State Department, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to be exact. DoS CTR funds and USAID's democracy program, along with NGB and CENTCOM dollars may mean a successful, stable Central Asia free to develop its own economy and democracies.

Shaping the International Environment

CENTCOM's role in shaping the CAS includes promoting stability, preventing or reducing conflicts, and peacetime deterrence. Shaping sets the stage for future operations and can lay the foundation for whether insurgencies will occur. As Max Manwaring points out:

The ultimate outcome of any counterinsurgency effort is not primarily determined by the skillful manipulation of violence in many military battles. Rather the outcome will be determined by the *legitimacy of the government, organization for unity of effort, type and consistency of support for the targeted government, ability to reduce outside aid to the insurgents, intelligence (or action against subversion), and discipline and capabilities of a government's armed forces*. The elements of this paradigm are not culturally bound in terms of Western values and goals. The paradigm can help to explain the dynamics of low intensity conflict not only in traditional and modernizing societies but also in industrial states facing the monumental changes unleashed by the breakdown of the former Soviet Empire.⁴ (emphasis added)

Taking each one of these presents ideas for CENTCOM's role in shaping the environment.

Activity	Rating
Military-to Military Contacts	Effective
Theater Engagement Planning Management Information System	Very Effective
Foreign Military Sales/Excess Defense Articles	Somewhat Effective
Education	Effective
Military Exercises	Somewhat Effective
Other Shaping Activities	Somewhat Effective

Table 3. CENTCOM Program Ratings Overview⁵

The following paragraphs evaluate ongoing programs and contain ideas for shaping the CAS.

Military-to-Military Contacts (Effective)

CENTCOM contacts range from CINC and senior DoD country visits to US Military and Naval Academy tours for CAS armed forces. This approach enhances *legitimacy of the governments* while displaying US commitment to the region. US contact visits should be

coordinated with DoS activities and across the interagency and joint military spectrums. CAS visits should begin to stress “Central Asia a regional fighting unit” by grouping low-level visits together. This type of contact is, as CAPT Warneke (J-7) described “cheap way to enhance learning and provide a forum for sharing perspectives.”⁶

Theater Engagement Planning Management and Information System (Very Effective)

TEPMIS is an excellent single source for managing and maintaining visibility into all of the organizations and activities in CENTCOM’s Area of Responsibility. This allows all agencies to build on other activities, enhances *unity of effort* in the region, and allows CINCCENTCOM to better visualize engagement strategy. The program’s main shortfall is the lack of accountability for database entries that could make this tool outdated/irrelevant. CINCCENTCOM should assign responsibility for updates and continue funding and integration of TEMPMIS.

Foreign Military Sales(FMS)/Excess Defense Articles (EDA; Somewhat Effective)

FMS/EDA programs for the CAS appear to be inadequate, totally reactionary, and disjointed. Determining CAS needs especially in border control, protection of high value facilities like oil refineries and pipelines, and maritime self-defense should be the main focus of FMS/EDA programs. Analyzing EDA for the *type and consistency of support for a targeted government* rather than a reactive response to CAS requests is the strategy of shaping. Problems that have slowed EDA programs like CAS defense structure and funding to get the materiel to the region, should be solved in standing agreements with the DoS rather than reactive negotiations. Although the temptation in EDA would be to provide the bulk to, “jewels of Central Asia” Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, careful consideration should be given to the effects on the earlier discussed balances of power. FMS/EDA should focus on the asymmetric nature of possible ethnic conflict by focusing on border security equipment and rapid response capabilities

(i.e., troops transport via helicopters, and fast coastal patrol boats). Trends should also steer the CAS towards US/NATO interoperability (i.e., communications, identification, friend or foe (IFF) equipment, etc) enhancing both the payoffs at PfP exercises and future training opportunities.

Education (Effective)

Prior to full CENTCOM engagement, some CAS students who were to attend two-month Professional Military Education (PME) courses would spend one year in the US learning English.⁷ Positive investment in language laboratories in each of the CAS is paying off. Continued investment in this area will make all other Individual Military Education and Training (IMET) programs possible. IMET funding for humanitarian assistance and field medicine courses have been a success for the Arizona National Guard. Members for all Central Asian States are scheduled for their courses, once again promoting regional, as well as, US-CAS unity.

Since all CAS nations deploy peacekeepers to Tajikistan, a superb idea would be US funding of UN peacekeeping courses for CAS participants.⁸ Again, legal issues stand in the way. IMET money must not be used to pay for foreign military attendance at foreign schools. Dialogue with the sometimes free Nordic UN peacekeeping courses can make CAS participation a reality. Continued efforts to send leaders to courses at the Marshall Center, senior and mid-level military PME courses, and NCO courses will enhance members' understanding of the proper civil-military relations. The desired PME end state should be a regional course within the CAS. With the unhealthy trend of ethnically-centered state militaries in the CAS, militaries must be unquestionably professional and respectful of both military and civilian minorities. A possible way to reduce the apprehension of ethnic minorities in the military is through leadership courses, award, and promotion systems based on US models and taught in US PME. To combat the growing sophistication of transnational actors, more technical IMET programs like the

USMC's border patrol, military operations in urban terrain (MOUT), and chemical and biological hazard training is mandatory. US Army helicopter training, Special Forces, and US Coast Guard (USCG) courses also are programs that will enhance CAS military capabilities to effectively employ our EDA materiel (i.e., UH-60 Blackhawks and USCG Patrol boats).⁹

Military Exercises (Somewhat Effective)

Although Central Asian States Battalion (CENTRASBAT) 2000 involves most of the CAS, it needs to evolve into a quarterly event. Effective in rapid reaction, airdrop, and tactical maneuver training, CENTCOM should also use Central Asia to enhance all US and CAS capabilities in MOUT, mountain operations, and WMD handling. The regional approach allows a single vision to be broadcast and sends the message that the US intends to support all of them.

Other Shaping Activities (Somewhat Effective)

The US Army's Corps of Engineers projects targeting both military projects (especially improvement of airfields and transportation infrastructure) and civil projects can create both capability and credibility for future CENTCOM operations. In shaping the WMD realm, CENTCOM must work more closely in conjunction with the Departments of Energy and State. Enticing more ex-Soviet scientists and continuing HEU buys with CTR funds remain vital activities. Possibly as training missions, securing, inspecting, and installing monitoring devices at the major WMD plants (i.e., Vozrozhdenly Island—see Appendix B) and military medical responses to WMD events enhances US security.

Drug and Technology Smuggling must be combated by an active border control strategy. Ongoing work with the Non-proliferation Division of DoS, the DEA, and Central Intelligence Agency will create enhanced border control measures and enforcement techniques for the region. This not only reduces direct threats to US and allied security but also limits the possibility of

spillover of ethnic violence may have on a given country. All of these are Shaping strategies that will be cheaper and more effective in protecting US goals than having to respond militarily.

Responding to the Full Spectrum of Crises

The fight in Central Asia will entail the deployment, engagement, or containment of warring parties, as well as conflict termination and resolution. Massive CENTCOM resources will be needed to develop, as the end state, a stable, prosperous region that bolsters potential US economic prosperity and respects the democratic rights of all of its inhabitants. Unfortunately the infrastructure required for such an operation has neither been planned for nor designed.

Due to geography, CENTCOM operational choices are limited. Quick-reaction, forced entry capabilities inherent in the US Marine Corps and logistics constrain possible operations in Central Asia. Inaccessible to maritime forces, US airlift would bear the brunt of requirements. From “beans to bullets” and the fighting airmen and soldiers, US Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) would have to use only 25 airfields in the CAS to perform its mission. The Maximum on the Ground (MOG) issues at these airfields remains a limiting factor that CENTCOM planners should address even in the Shaping Phase.¹⁰

Additionally, the “air bridge” to get to Central Asia will be hindered by political constraints. For instance, if CENTCOM planners design routes with Turkish overflight required, then US involvement in the disputed area will have to mirror Turkish interests as well. Other routes planners may take are Greek and Bulgarian or Macedonia and Romanian overflights. Again, Turkish relations with Bulgaria have been rapidly improving making this a vulnerable capability to plan on. Unconventionally, prepositioning airlift in Georgia or other Caspian countries prior to hostilities, shipping men and material through the Bosphorous Straits to that country and then airlifting them to the CAS is a workable, but inefficient, method of global reach. In any case,

once in the CAS, individual states may deny overflight in step with their CIS security arrangement. The bottomline for preparing and conducting a fight in the CAS is that it will be politically constrained and nearly impossible to sustain logistically.

Preparing Now for an Uncertain Future

Training the Force

CENTCOM must add to its already heavy task list the force training for CENTCOM attached units that may be employed in the CAS. These may include courses, exercises, and engagement by linguists, Special Operations Forces (SOF), National Guard units, and Air and Coast Guard forces. A shortfall that should be addressed first is linguistic training that affects our assessment of the intelligence situation and our effective engagement. CENTCOM must clearly state its increased training requirement for total force linguists by Defense Language Institute for all CAS languages. Other significant shortfalls in training include formal UN peacekeeping education and MOUT operations. With ethnic conflict caused by spillover, the most probable future challenge for the CAS, UN involvement becomes a question of “when,” not “if.” Leadership and conduct of these unique operations will be necessary skills that CENTCOM forces must possess.

Enabling the Force: Infrastructure Design

Transportation Infrastructure. CENTCOM must invest in increasing the MOG according to Operation Plan development. CENTCOM focus on a handful of airfields will enhance force protection and allow a more rapid timeline for project completion. In conjunction with TRANSCOM, CENTCOM must constantly update all plans/suitability reports and ensure that flight/navigation standard evaluations have been concluded as soon as possible. Other methods

of transport, particularly suitable land routes connecting the airfields to users, should also be investigated by TRANSCOM to create logistically feasible OPLAN options.

Communications Infrastructure. Not only are CENTCOM's options constrained by logistics, but by communications as well. Satellite coverage giving CENTCOM its reachback capability is limited. J6 contracts for extra bandwidth, specifically commercial bandwidth, should be negotiated today as first-right-of refusal.¹¹ Other CENTCOM activities that would enhance information backbones in the CAS will increase military possibilities and promote faster information exchange between regional CAS structures. Culturally, increasing information exchange and access to world information systems will increase the scope and perception of CAS leaders. Integrated air defense, border security surveillance tools, and effective military logistics can even be shared among CAS partners once robust communications are in place. Public relations, psychological operations, and other information warfare options also become available to CENTCOM and CAS militaries through the proliferation of communications systems. Close coordination with the Joint Spectrum Center, Joint Command and Control Warfare Center, and US Information Agency will help CENTCOM build effective communications systems in the CAS.

Military/Civilian Airlift Contracts. With the tremendous demand for logistics being routed by air, CENTCOM (via USTRANSCOM) contracts should ensure early access to the major US freight carriers and Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) assets. Already running freight into all five of the CAS, DHL, Federal Express, and United Parcel Service can actually outperform Air Mobility Command deliveries by getting freight there in 2-5 days.¹² Negotiations should be expanded to include assets like airlines currently transporting CENTCOM personnel into Southwest Asia (i.e., Tower Air, American Trans Air, etc.).

Organizing the Force

According to CENTCOM personnel, the delegation of Central Asia in CENTCOM's AOR and US European Command's Area of Interest only brought two billets with it. Reviewing each functional area needs to be accomplished to ensure there are adequate billets. Additionally, with the significant threat of humanitarian tragedy like ethnic conflict, CENTCOM more than any other unified commands needs to pioneer a robust Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) capability. According to then Commander of Operation Restore Hope, LtGen Zinni, USMC, noted:

Instead of thinking about warfighting agencies like command and control, you create a political committee, a civil military operations center-CMOC-to interface with volunteer organizations. These become the heart of your operations, as opposed to a combat or fire support operations center.¹³

A list of organizations that are notionally engaged is available in Joint Pub 3-08 Volume II and should serve as the basis for the CMOC.¹⁴ This CMOC should apply the lessons CENTCOM learned in Operation RESTORE HOPE by investing in the staffing and education of permanent CMOC personnel. Just as the new concept of the "Aerospace Operations Center as a weapons system" will ensure properly trained full-time manning, a CENTCOM-sponsored "CMOC as a weapons system" can be a revolutionary way to get the DoD to realize the importance of the command and control of Military Operations Other Than War.

Coordinating with the Force

CENTCOM's imperative of global engagement starts with shaping the environment. CENTCOM-State Department liaisons remain vital in the national pursuit of unity of effort. Coordinated planning, funding, and executing strategies must build on each other synergistically to promote stability and prevent ethnic violence in the region. CENTCOM needs to use its liaisons to develop procedures that allow ease of FMS/EDA and WMD clean-up challenges

discussed earlier that will make military engagement more successful. These issues need four-star endorsement today in CENTCOM's quest to prepare for an uncertain tomorrow.

Commitment

A key ingredient in successful intervention is the credibility of the international commitment. External interventions that the warring parties fear will soon fade may be worse than no intervention at all. Ambiguous policies signal weaker parties that they may do better by fighting longer and harder than compromising for what they can get now. In today's world there is no practical alternative to an international community actively engaged over the long term in containing ethnic conflict.¹⁵

In the past, it has required "boots on the ground" to show US resolve. In terms of ethnic conflict or spillover, all that may be required is heightened mil-mil contact or a precisely timed airdrop exercise. But in Central Asia, where ethnic issues have been around for many years, the US effort must also last many years. Applying the military IOP must be clearly thought-out, applied even-handedly throughout the CAS, and must be sustainable. To do so will take creative planners and equally creative coalitions, like the ones built during Operation DESERT STORM. Arab, European, Russian, Chinese partners, partners with other Central Asian States, and partnerships with non-governmental and private volunteer organizations will be the only successful strategy to deal with ethnic conflict and spillover within this volatile region.

Notes

¹ Sisk, Timothy D. *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts* (New York, NY.; Carnegie Corporation, 1996), 87.

² Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *National Military Strategy*. Washington, DC., 11.

³ "National Guard Bureau International Affairs Central Command Theater Overview." n.p. on-line. Internet, 30 Dec 1999, available from http://www.ngb.dtic.mil/bureau/ochief/ia/centcom_ovrview1.html.

⁴ Max G. Manwaring. "The Manwaring Paradigm." *Old Threats in a New World*. Edited by Corr and Sloan (Westview Studies, 1992).

⁵ The rating system is based on both potential, if the fixes are implemented (e.g., TEPMIS) and current (e.g., FMS/EDA provides minimal aid without a strategy).

Notes

⁶ Warneke, CAPT, USN, Comments in 20 Jan 2000 lecture in Wood Auditorium, Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL.

⁷ LtCol Hayman. "CCJ4/7 Information Paper. Subject: Security Assistance Program-Uzbekistan." 15 Nov 99.

⁸ Escudero, 3.

⁹ Coast Guard courses and SOF course titles vary based on levels of experience and requirements.

¹⁰ Although there are 11 airfields more than 10,000 feet long and deemed suitable for even C-5 operations, but MOG restricts effective war-time operations at all eleven. "Airfield Suitability." n.p. on-line. Internet, 17 Dec 1999, available from <http://www.amc.af.mil/do/doa/doas.html> and also per conversation 17 Dec 1999 with Major Jeff Hupy.

¹¹ First right of refusal includes a contract that allows us to decline a capability before any other customer.

¹² "UPS" n.p. online. Internet, 22 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.ups.com> and "DHL." n.p. on-line. Internet, 22 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.dhl.com> and "Federal Express." n.p. on-line. Internet, 22 Jan 2000, available from <http://www.fedex.com>

¹³ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Joint Publication 3-08 Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations, Vol I*. Washington, DC., 9 Oct 96, III-16-19.

¹⁴ Or the On-Site Operations Coordination Center in UN operations Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *Joint Publication 3-08 Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations, Vol II*. Washington, DC., 9 Oct 96. B-A-36 thru 38.

¹⁵ Rothchild, Donald and David Lake. "Preventing Ethnic Conflict" n.p. on-line. Internet, 13 Oct 1999, available from <http://www-igcc.ucsd.edu/IGCC2/newletterprev/newletter/study.html>.

Part 5

Summary

So what is the biggest threat to CENTCOM in Central Asia? I have demonstrated that ethnic violence caused by spillover from neighboring countries will be the most likely problem. Conflict in the CAS should cause CENTCOM great concern because of the incredibly high stakes. The region's weapons of mass destruction, their resources, US regional influence, and the fact that this geographical crossroad has all of the most powerful countries in the world watching is the exact reason why the United States must maintain its global engagement in Central Asia focused on promoting stated US interests.

To attain those national goals, we must engage all IOPs as an integrated force. The United States can little afford to rely on sanctions like those that took seven years to work in Libya as their primary means of securing the area as a stable democratic region. The price of standing still is just too high. CENTCOM must engage now in all five of the CAS fostering a regional approach to security. This is the only way to make each of the ethnic groups feel represented and thus less threatened. But that is only one solution.

To achieve stability, promote democracy, and ensure our national security, CENTCOM must consider the nature of ethnic conflict, the principles of insurgent warfare and MOOTW, and develop a thoughtful strategy that creates a new regional vision for Central Asia. That strategy, built with the discussions of this paper should use the following tenets as a framework:

- Does the plan rely on a regional approach? Demand integration of each country?
- Does the plan consider reactions by the Shanghai-Five? Turkish and Iranian reaction?
- Is the plan sustainable with clear goals attainable in both the near and far term?
- Is there burden sharing with Asia and Europe, the prime recipients of CAS oil?
- Does the plan build on the US ability to introduce forces into the CAS if necessary?
- Does the plan add to the legitimacy of the current government?
- Does the plan assign accountability to the government for its treatment of ethnic groups?
- Is the plan fully integrated/congruent with all other IOPs and the NSS/NMS?

In responding to these questions CENTCOM planners should be looking for positive answers that will ensure a synergistic approach.

The United States once again has the opportunity to shape the future of countries much like the Marshall Plan did. In their wildest dreams, the authors of that plan probably could not have envisioned that in 50 years the rubble of Europe would be a bustling center for one of the most powerful economic unions in the world. Hopefully, CENTCOM will have just such a vision for Central Asia.

Appendix A

Ethnic Disposition

Group	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Kazakh	44.3	0.9	n/a	2	4.1
Kyrgyz	n/a	52.4	n/a	n/a	0.9
Tajik	n/a	0.8	64.9	n/a	4.7
Turkmen	n/a	n/a	n/a	73.3	0.6
Uzbek	2.2	12.9	25.1	9.1	71.4
Russian	35.8	21.5	3.5	9.8	8.3
Ukranian	5.1	2.5	n/a	n/a	0.8
German	3.6	2.4	n/a	n/a	n/a
Uigher	n/a	0.9	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural	44.1	64.9	71.9	54.9	61.3
Urban	55.9	35.1	28.1	45.1	38.7

Note: Disposition in percentage: “n/a” reflects that either they are a negligible part of the population or sources did not break them out further. Most of these groups probably were grouped into the “Other” category. (Source: Tables 3 and 4 available from http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/uzbekistan/uz_appen.html).

Appendix B

Defense Industries of Selected CAS



Note: The BW/CW facility at Vozrozhdenly Island in the Aral Sea shared with Uzbekistan is depicted on the map. Sources report the north half (Kazakh) was the living quarters for Soviet scientists while the south (Uzbek) was the laboratory. (Map source available at: http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/commonwealth/DfnsIndust-Kazakhstan.jpg ,and http://www.lib.utexas.edu/Libs/PCL/Map_collection/commonwealth/DfnsIndust-Uzbekistan.jpg.

Details including satellite imagery of “Voz” Island are available at

<http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/facility/cbw/index.html>.



Appendix C

Central Asian Oil Infrastructure



Note: This map depicts Trans-Caspian issues. The following is a worldview that illustrates why many international powers are interested in Central Asia and its energy flow. (Source available from <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/caspgrph.html>).

This map illustrates various proposed and existing oil and gas pipeline routes across Eurasia. The legend identifies several key projects:

- Existing Russian oil pipeline:** Shown as an orange line.
- Proposed China pipelines:** Shown as yellow lines.
- Caspian Pipeline Consortium route:** Shown as a blue line.
- Proposed Baku-Ceyhan pipeline route:** Shown as a green line.
- Early oil pipeline routes:** Shown as light green dashed lines.
- Possible Iran oil pipeline route:** Shown as a red line.
- Iran-proposed gas pipeline:** Shown as a purple line.
- Possible Asian oil pipeline route:** Shown as an orange line.
- Pakistani-proposed oil pipeline:** Shown as a light green line.
- Pakistani-proposed gas pipeline:** Shown as a brown line.

The map also includes symbols for "by ship" (dotted lines), "oil-producing regions" (black dots), and "ports" (blue circles). Major geographical features like the Caspian Sea, Black Sea, Persian Gulf, and Red Sea are labeled, along with numerous countries and cities such as Moscow, Samara, Baku, Tehran, and Istanbul. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances up to 600 kilometers and 500 miles.

List of Abbreviations

CAS	Central Asian States
CENTCOM	US Central Command
CENTRASBAT	Central Asian States Battalion
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CMOC	Civil-Military Operations Center
CRAF	Civil Reserve Air Fleet
CTR	Cooperative Threat Reduction
DoS	Department of State
EDA	Excess Defense Articles
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
HEU	Highly Enriched Uranium
IFF	Identification Friend or Foe
IMET	Individual Military Education Training
IMF	International Monetary Fund
J-5	Political/Military Affairs
MOG	Maximum on the Ground
MOUT	Military Operations in Urban Terrain
NGB	National Guard Bureau
NIS	Newly Independent States
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PME	Professional Military Education
SOF	Special Operations Forces
TCA	Traditional CINC Activities
TEPMIS	Theater Engagement Planning/ Management Information System
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USTRANSCOM	United States Transportation Command
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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